(a) whether it is a fact that atleast 3000 drug offenders are behind bars in Delhi Jail and awaiting trial;

(b) if so, since when most of these offenders are awaiting trial;

(c) what are the legal hurdles which have stalled the judicial process; and

(d) what steps are being contemplated to expedite such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) As per available information, there are 1456 drug offenders awaiting trial in Central Jail, Tihar, New Delhi.

(b) More than 10 years	1
5 to 10 years	66
3 to 5 years	303
1 to 3 years	551
6 Months to 1 Year	168
Less than 6 months	367
TOTAL:	1456

(c) They are attending the courts when summoned. Delay in completion of their trials is attributable to large pendency of cases in courts.

(d) The Government of Delhi has set up 10 Special Courts for speedy trial of offences under the NDPS Act.

Wealth tax on agricultural land

3723. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the rate of "Wealth Tax' imposed on agricultural land adjacent to cities or far away from it;

(b) what is the jurisdiction of imposing such tax; and

(c) what steps are being taken to remove this tax?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Wealth tax is payable on the net wealth, computed under the provisions of the Wealth tax Act, at the rate of one per cent of the amount by which the net wealth exceeds Rs.15 lacs. The Finance Act, 1992 has specified only six assets which are exigible to wealth-tax. Agricultural land is not one of the specified assets.

(b) Wealth-tax is imposed as per the provisions of the Wealth-tax Act, 1957 (Act No. 27 of 1957).

(c) There is no proposal at present to remove Wealth-tax.

Reforms not for the Poor

3724. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Govt. has been drawn to a news items published in the Economic Times dated 8th June, 1994 under the heading "Reforms not helping poor".

(b) if so, the reaction of Govt. thereto; and

(c) the comparative impact of new economic reforms on prices and employment in the country during 1992-93 and 1993-94?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In India, the economic reforms were introduced in response to our felt needs to overcome the economic crisis of 1991 and to put the economy on the path of sustainable higher and broad-based growth. Since the introduction of economic reforms, the economic situation in the country has improved in several respects.

(i) The growth rate of GDP which had fallen to 1.2 per cent in 1991-92 improved to about 4 per cent in the subsequent two years,

(ii) The balance of payments position improved dramatically following a 20 per cent increase in exports in dollar terms in 1993-94 and a sharp increase in capital inflows.

(iii) The foreign exchange reservers (excluding gold and SDRs) stood at $ 15.1 billion at the end of 1993-94 and $ 17.6 billion as on August 12,